

CLAIMS

1. A printing method comprising the steps of:  
providing a substrate;  
forming, on a surface of the substrate, a first image using a pigment- or dye-containing first colorant;  
and  
then forming a second image using a pearl pigment-containing second colorant.
2. A printing method comprising the steps of:  
providing a substrate;  
forming, on a surface of the substrate, a first image using a pearl pigment-containing first colorant;  
and  
then forming a second image using a pigment- or dye-containing second colorant.
3. The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said pearl pigment comprises mica having a surface coated with a metal oxide.
4. The method according to claim 3, wherein said metal oxide is titanium oxide and/or iron oxide.
5. The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said pearl pigment further comprises a fluorescent agent or a fluorescent brightening agent.
6. The method according to claim 1 or 2, which further comprises the step of forming a protective layer using a protective agent on the first image or the second image.
7. The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the formation of the first image or the second image on the surface of the substrate is carried out by a thermal transfer method.
8. The method according to claim 7, wherein said thermal transfer method involves the thermal transfer of the first colorant or the second colorant onto an intermediate thermal transfer sheet.
9. A substrate comprising an image formed by the

method according to claim 1 or 2.

10. A thermal transfer sheet comprising:

a substrate sheet;

a first colored layer comprising a pigment or a dye as a colorant; and

a second colored layer comprising a pearl pigment as a colorant.

11. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 10, wherein said pearl pigment is one according to any one of claims 3 to 5.

12. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 10, wherein a release layer or a peel layer is provided between the substrate sheet and the second colored layer.

13. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 12, wherein said peel layer contains a fluorescent agent.

14. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 10, which further comprises a protective layer.

15. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 14, which further comprises a release layer provided between the substrate sheet and the protective layer.

16. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 10, wherein an adhesive layer is provided on the surface of any one of the first colored layer, the second colored layer, and the protective layer.

17. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 10, which further comprises a backside layer provided on the backside of the substrate sheet.

18. The thermal transfer sheet according to claim 10, which has a layer construction of the substrate sheet and, provided on the surface of the substrate sheet in the following order, the first colored layer, the second colored layer, and the protective layer, or a layer construction of the substrate sheet and, provided on the surface of the substrate sheet in the following order, the second colored layer, the first colored layer, and the protective layer.

19. A method for image formation, comprising the

steps of: providing the thermal transfer sheet according to any one of claims 10 to 18; and forming an image on a substrate by thermal transfer using the thermal transfer sheet.

20. A substrate comprising an image formed by the method according to claim 19.

21. An intermediate thermal transfer sheet comprising a substrate sheet and a transfer part provided separably on the substrate sheet,

said transfer part comprising a receptive layer for receiving an image transferred by thermal transfer from the thermal transfer sheet according to any one of claims 10 to 18.

22. A method for image formation on a substrate using a thermal transfer sheet and an intermediate thermal transfer sheet, comprising the steps of:

providing a thermal transfer sheet comprising a first colored layer or a second colored layer, and an intermediate transfer sheet comprising a receptive layer;

forming an image on the receptive layer in the intermediate transfer sheet by thermal transfer using the thermal transfer sheet; and

thermally transferring the receptive layer with the image transferred thereon, from its side on which the image has not been formed, onto the substrate to form an image on the substrate,

said thermal transfer sheet being one according to any one of claims 10 to 18, said intermediate transfer sheet being one according to claim 21.

23. A substrate comprising an image formed by the method according to claim 22.